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March 16, 2025

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426

Subject: Opposition to Decommissioning of the Potter Valley Project (FERC Project No. 77) and Non-Project Use of Project Lands

Dear FERC Commissioners and Staff,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed decommissioning of the Potter Valley Project (PVP) and the associated request for non-project use of project lands, as outlined in Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) Final Draft Surrender Application and Decommissioning Plan submitted on January 31, 2025. As a resident of Potter Valley, California for 35 years, I believe that dismantling this critical infrastructure and repurposing project lands for a new diversion facility would have severe, irreversible consequences for water supply reliability, agriculture, and the livelihoods of communities across Mendocino, Lake, Sonoma, and Marin counties.

The Potter Valley Project has been a cornerstone of regional water management for over a century, diverting water from the Eel River to the Russian River watershed to support nearly 600,000 residents, countless farms, and essential fire protection services. Its removal threatens to disrupt this vital system, particularly for the Potter Valley Irrigation District and downstream users who rely on this water for their survival. PG&E's own documentation acknowledges potential "unavoidable adverse impacts to water reliability and cost, economic opportunity (particularly farming and ranching), recreation value, and community way of life" in the Russian River watershed. These risks far outweigh any speculative benefits of decommissioning.

Furthermore, I oppose the non-project use of project lands to construct the proposed New Eel-Russian Facility (NERF) by the Eel-Russian Project Authority (ERPA). This plan fails to guarantee the same level of water security as the existing infrastructure and instead ensures that the water my community has relied on for over 100 years will not be available during the dry season. The current system, while aging, has proven its value and could be modernized rather than abandoned. Decommissioning and repurposing the lands dismisses viable alternatives, such as retrofitting the dams for improved fish passage and seismic safety, which could balance ecological goals with human needs. Improvement of

the dams and fish passage could also allow for increased water flows through the diversion and perhaps profitable electricity generation.

I urge FERC to reject PG&E's surrender application and deny the request for non-project use of project lands. Instead, I request a thorough exploration of options to preserve and upgrade the Potter Valley Project, ensuring continued water diversions to the Russian River watershed while addressing environmental concerns. The stakes are too high for the communities, ecosystems, and economies that depend on this system to allow its dismantling without exhausting all possibilities for its preservation.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,
Erin Brazil